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FOR TO-DAY

BY ARTHUR DAVISON FICKE

I

Arm! Arm! . . . and end this thrifty faith in peace,
Too soon arisen in a savage world.
Trust not the tenure of our empty lease
Of safety mid the ruin round us hurled.
It was a dream; it came and it must go
Like the great vision which two thousand years
Has brought at last to final overthrow,
And Christ is gone, and the stark truth appears.
Arm! Arm!—or dare to choose the one sole way
That else remains:—welcome each conquering horde
That would subject your nation; hail the day
Of the proud coming of your alien lord;
And let your country on the wind go by,
Since all you then could do for her is die.

II

Strange! that men die for mastery of the gate
Or council-halls of any earthly land!
Beyond such phantoms dwells our deeper fate
And all the treasures of each heart's demand.
Though this our nation perished without strife
At any hand that hungered for vain dross,
Still would the scope of each man's separate life
Exchange for gain all that it bore of loss.
If Asia came, and we like Rome went down,
Our eagle like her eagles slain and done,
Still would survive all that was once our crown,
With splendors of the Eastern soul made one.
If that is dire,—then sound the fierce alarm,
And wear your folly nobly! Arm! Arm! Arm!

ARTHUR DAVISON FICKE.